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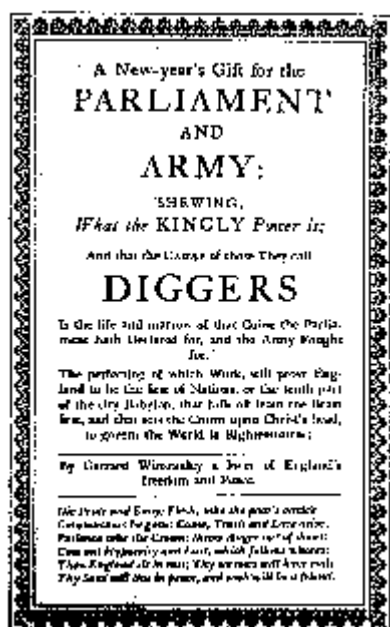
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Land and Freedom

Digger pamphlet by Gerrard Winstanley

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# A New-years Gift FOR THE PARLIAMENT AND ARMIE: *SHEWING, What the KINGLY Power is; And that the CAUSE of those They call DIGGERS*

Is the life and marrow of that Cause the Parliament hath Declared for, and the Army Fought for; The perfecting of which Work, will prove *England* to be the first of Nations, or the tenth part of the city *Babylon*, that falls off from the Beast first, and that sets the Crown upon Christs head, to govern the World in Righteousness:

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By *Jerrard Winstanley* a lover of *Englands* freedom andPeace.

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*Die Pride and Envie; Flesh, take the poor's advice.  
Covetousnesse be gon: Come, Truth and Love arise.  
Patience take the Crown; throw Anger out of dores:  
Cast out Hypocrisie and Lust, which follows whores:*

*Then England sit in rest; Thy sorrows will have end;  
Thy Sons will live in peace, and each will be a friend.*

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*London, Printed for Giles Calvert, 1650.*

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A

# New yeers Gift SENT TO THE PARLIAMENT AND ARMIE.

Gentlemen of the Parliament and Armie; you and the Common people have assisted each other, to cast out the Head of oppression which was Kingly power, seated in one mans hand, and that work is now done, and till that work was done you called upon the people to assist you to deliver this distressed bleeding dying nation out of bondage; And the people came and failed you not, counting neither purse nor blood too dear to part with to effect this work.

The Parliament after this have made an Act to cast out Kingly power, and to make *England* a free Common-wealth. These Acts the People are much rejoyced with, as being words forerunning their freedome, and they wait for their accomplishment that their joy may be full; for as words without action are a cheat, and kills the comfort of a righteous spirit, so words performed in action does comfort and nourish the life thereof.

Now Sirs, wheresoever we spie out Kingly power, no man I hope shall be troubled to declare it, nor afraid to cast it out, having both Act of Parliament, the Souldiers Oath, and the common peoples consent on his side; for Kingly power is like a great spread tree, if you lop the head or top-bow, and let the other Branches and root stand, it will grow again and recover fresher strength. If any ask me, What Kingly power is? I Answer, there is a twofold Kingly power. The one is, the Kingly power of righteousnesse, and this is the power of Almighty God, ruling the whole creation in peace, and keeping it together. And this is the power of universal love, leading people into all truth, teaching every one to doe as he would be done unto. Now once more striving with flesh and blood, shaking down every thing that cannot stand, and bringing every one into the Unitie of himself, the one Spirit of love and righteousnesse, and so will work a through restauration. But this Kingly power is above all, and will tread all covetousness, pride, envy, and self-love, and all other enemies whatsoever, under his feet and take the kingdom and government of the Creation out of the hand of self-seeking and self-honouring Flesh, and rule the alone King of Righteousness in the earth; and this indeed is Christ himself, who will cast out the curse; But this is not that Kingly power intended by that Act of Parliament to be cast out, but pretended to be set up, though this Kingly power be much fought against both by Parliament, Armie, Clergy, and people; but when the are made to see him, then they shall mourn, because they have persecuted him.

But the other Kingly power, is the power of unrighteousness, which indeed is the Devil; And O that there were such a heart in Parliament and Army, as to perform your own Act; then People would never complain of you for breach of Covenant, for your Covetousness, Pride, and too much Self-seeking that is in

you. And you on the other-side would never have cause to complain of the Peoples murmurings against you. Truly this jarring that is between you and the People is, The Kingly power; yea that very Kingly power which you have made an Act to cast out; therefore see it be fulfilled on your part; for the Kingly power of Righteousness expects it, or else he will cast you out for Hypocrites and unsavory Salt; for he looks upon all your Actions, and truly there is abundance of Rust about your Actings, which makes them that they do not shine bright.

This Kingly power, is covetousness in his branches, or the power of self-love, ruling in one or in many men over others, and enslaving those who in the Creation are their equals; nay, who are in the strictness of equity rather their Masters: And this Kingly power is usually set in the Chair of Government, under the name of Prerogative, when he rules in one, over other: And under the name of State Priviledge of Parliament, when he rules in many over others: and this Kingly power, is alwayes raised up, and established by the Sword, and therefore he is called the Murderer, or the great red Dragon, which fights against *Michael*, for he enslaves the weakness of the People under him, denying an equal freedom in the Earth to every one, which the Law of Righteousness gave every man in his creation. This I say is Kingly power under darkness, and as he rules in men, so he makes men jar one against another, and is the cause of all Wars and Complainings; he is known by his outward actions, and his action at this very day fills all places; for this power of darkness rules, and would rule, and is that only Enemy that fights against Creation and National Freedom: And this Kingly power is he, which you have made an Act of Parliament to cast out. And now you Rulers of *England*, play the men, and be valiant for the Truth, which is Christ: for assure your selves God will not be mocked, nor the Devil will not be mocked; for First you say and profess you own the Scriptures of Prophets and Apostles, and God looks that you should perform that Word in action: Secondly you have Declared against the Devil, and if you do not now go through with your work, but slack your hand by hypocritical self-love, and so suffer this dark Kingly power to rise higher and Rule, you shall find, he will maule both you, and yours to purpose.

The life of this dark Kingly power, which you have made an Act of Parliament and Oath to cast out, if you search it to the bottom, you shall see it lies within the iron chest of cursed Covetousness, Who gives the Earth to some part of mankind, and denies it to another part of mankind: and that part that hath the Earth, hath no right from the Law of creation to take it to himself, and shut out others; but he took it away violently by Theft and Murder in Conquest: As when our Norman *William* came into *England* and conquered, he turned the English out, and gave the Land unto his Norman Souldiers every man his parcel to inclose, and hence rose up Propriety; for this is the fruit if War from the beginning, for it removes Propriety out of a weaker into a stronger hand, but still upholds the curse of Bondage; and hereby the Kingly power which you have made an Act, and Sworn to cast out, does remove himself from one chair to another; and so long as the Sword rules over brethren, (mind what I say) so long the Kingly power of darkness Rules, and so large as yet is his Kingdom; which spreads from Sea to Sea, and fills she Earth; but Christ is rising who will take the Dominion and Kingdom out of his hand, and his power of Righteousness, shall rise and spred from East to West, from North to South,

and fill the Earth with himself, and cast the other cursed power out, when Covetousness sheaths his Sword, and ceases to rage in the field; he first makes sharp Laws of Bondage, That those that are conquered, and that by him are appointed not to enjoy the Earth, but are turned out, shall be Servants, Slaves, and Vassals to the Conquerers party: so those Laws that upholds Whips, Prisons, Gallows is but the same power of the Sword that raged, and that was drunk with Blood in the field.

King *Charles*, it is true, was the Head of this Kingly power in *England*, and he Reigned as he was a Successor of the last Norman Conquerer: and whosoever you be, that hath Propriety of Land, hath your Titles and Evidences made to you in his or his Ancestors Name, and from his and their Will and Kingly Power; I am sure, he was not our Creator, and therefore parcelled out the Earth to some, and denied it to others, therefore he must needs stand as a Conquerer, and was the Head of this Kingly power, that burden and oppresses the People, and that is the cause of all our Wars and Divisions; for if this Kingly power of Covetousness, which is the unrighteous Divider, did not yet Rule: both Parliament, Army, and rich People ', would cheerfully give consent that those we call Poor should Dig and freely plant the Waste and Common Land for a livelihood, seeing there is Land enough, and more by half then is made use of, and not be suffered to perish for want. And yet O ye Rulers of *England*, you make a blazing profession, That you know, and that you own God, Christ, and the Scriptures: but did Christ ever declare such hardness of heart? did not he bid the rich man go and sell all that he hath and give to the Poor? and does not the Scripture say, If thou makest a Covenant, keep it, though it be to thy loss: But truly it will not be to your loss, to let your fellow Creatures, your equals in the Creation, nay those that have been faithful in your Cause, and so your Friends; I say it will not be to your loss to let them quietly improve the Waste and Common Land, that they may live in peace, freed from the heave burdens of Poverty; for hereby our own Land will be increased with all sorts of Commodities, and the People will be knit together in love, to keep out a forreign Enemy that endeavours, and that will endeavour as yet, to come like an Army of cursed Ratts and Mice to destroy our inheritance; so that if this Freedom be quietly granted to us, you grant it but to your selves, to Englishmen, to your own flesh and blood: and you do but give us our own neither, which Covetousness, in the Kingly power hath, and yet does hold from us; for the Earth in the first Creation of it, was freely given to whole mankind, without respect of Persons; therefore you Lords of Mannors, and you Rulers of *England*, if you own God, Christ and Scripture, now make Restitution, and deliver us quiet possession of our Land, which the Kingly power as yet holds from us.

While this Kingly power raigned in one man called *Charls*, all sort of people complained of oppression, both Gentry and Common people, because their lands, inclosures, and Copie-holds were intangled, and because their Trades were destroyed by Monopolizing Patentees, and your troubles were that you could not live free from oppression in the earth: Thereupon you that were the Gentry when you were assembled in Parliament, you called upon the poor Common People to come and help you, and cast out oppression and you that complained are helped and freed, and that top-bow is lopped off the tree of Tyrannie, and Kingly power in that one particular is cast out; but alas

oppression is a great tree still, and keeps off the son of freedome from the poor Commons still, he hath many branches and great roots which must be grub'd up, before every one can sing Sions songs in peace.

As we spie out Kingly power we must declare it, and cast it out, or else we shall deny the Parliament of *England* and their Acts, and so prove Traitors to the Land, by denying obedience thereunto. Now there are Three Branches more of Kinglie power greater then the former that oppresses this Land wonderfully; and these are the power of the Tithing Priests over the Tenths of our labours; and the power of Lords of Mannors, holding the free use of the Commons, and wast Land from the poor, and the intolerable oppression either of bad Laws, or of bad Judges corrupting good Laws; these are branches of the Norman conquest and Kingly power still, and wants a Reformation.

For as the first, *William* the Conqueror promised, That if the Clergie would preach him up, so that the people might be bewitched, so as to receive him to be Gods Anointed over them, he would give them the Tenths of the Lands increase yeerly; and they did it, and he made good his Promise; and do we not yet see, That if the Clergie can get tithes or Money, they will turn as the Ruling power turns, any way; to Popery, to Protestantisme; for a King, against a King, for Monarchy, for State-Government; they cry who bids most wages, they will be on the strongest side, for an Earthly maintenance; yea, and when they are lifted up, they woud Rule too, because they are called Spiritual men: It is true indeed, they are spiritual; but it is of the spiritual power of Covetousness and Pride; for the spiritual power of Love and Righteousness they know not; for if they knew it, they would not persecute and raile against him as they do.

The Clergie will serve on any side, like our ancient Laws, that will serve any master: They will serve the Papists, they will serve the Protestants, they will serve the King, they will serve the States; they are one and the same Tools for Lawyers to work with under any Government. O you Parliament-men of *England*, cast those whorish Laws out of doors, that are so Common, that pretend love to every one, and is faithful to none; for truly, he that goes to Law, as the Proverb is, shall die a Beggar: so that old Whores, and old Laws, picks mens pockets, and undoes them: If the fault lie in the Laws, and much does, burn all your old Law-Books in *Cheapside*, & set up a Government upon your own Foundation: do not put new Wine into old Bottles; but as your Government must be new, so let the Laws be new, or else you will run farther into the Mud, where you stick already, as though you were fast in an *Irish* Bogge; for you are so far sunke, that he must have good eyes that can see where you are: but yet all are not blind, there are eyes that sees you: but if the fault lies in the Judges of the Law, surely such men deserve no power in a Reforming Common-wealth, that burdens all sorts of People.

And truly Ile tell you plain, your Two Acts of Parliament are excellent and Righteous: The One to cast out Kingly power; The Other to make *England* a Free Common-wealth: build upon these Two, it is a firm Foundation, and your House will be the glory of the World; and I am confident, the righteous Spirit will love you: do not stick in the Bogge of Covetousness; Let not self-love so be-muddy your brain, that you should lose your selves in the thicket of bramble bush-words, and set never a strong Oak of some stable Action for the Freedome of the poor Oppressed that helped you when you complained of Oppression. Let not Pride blind your eyes, that you should forget you are the

Nations Servants, and so prove *Solomons* words good in your selves, That Servants ride on Horse-back and Coaches, when as Princes, such as Chose you, and set you there, go on foot: and many of them, through their love to the Nation, have so wasted themselves, that now they can hardly get Bread, but with great difficulty. I tell you this is a sore Evil, and this is truth; therefore think upon it, it is a poor mans Advice, and you shall finde weight in it, if you Do as well as Say.

Then Secondly for Lords of Mannors, They were *William* the Conquerors Colonels and Favourites, and he gave a large circuit of Land to every one, called A Lord-ship, that they might have a watchful eye, that if any of the conquered English should begin to Plant themselves upon any Common or waste Land, to live out of sight or out of slavery, that then some Lord of Mannour or other might see and know of it, and drive them off, as these Lords of Mannors now a dayes, endeavours to drive off the Diggers from Digging upon the Commons; but we expect the Rulers of the Land will grant unto us their Friends, the benefit of their own Acts against Kingly power, and not suffer that Norman power to crush the poor Oppressed, who helped them in their straits, nor suffer that Norman power to bud fresher out, & so in time may come to over-top our deer bought Freedom more then ever.

Search all your Laws, and Ile adventure my life, for I have little else to lose, That all Lords of Mannors hold Title to the Commons by no stronger hold then the Kings Will, whose Head is cut off; and the King held Title as he was a Conqueror; now if you cast off the King who was the Head of that power, surely the power of Lords of Mannors is the same; therefore performe your own Act of Parliament, and cast out that part of the Kinglie power likewise, that the People may see you understand what you Say and Do, and that you are faithfull.

For truly the Kinglie power reigns strongly in the Lords of Mannors over the Poor; for my own particular, I have in other Writings as well as in this, Declared my Reasons, That the common Land is the poor Peoples Proprietie; and I have Digged upon the Commons, and I hope in time to obtain the Freedom, to get Food and Raiment therefrom by righteous labour, which is all I desire; and for so doing, the supposed Lord of that Mannor hath Arrested me twice; First, in an Action of £20. Trespass for Plowing upon the Commons, which I never did; and because they would not suffer me to Plead my own Cause, they made shift to pass a Sentence of Execution against some Cows I kept, supposing they had been mine, and took them away; but the right owner reprieved them, & fetched the Cowes back; so greedy are these Theeves and Murderers after my life for speaking the truth, and for maintaining the Life and Marrow of the Parliaments cause in my Actions.

And now they have Arrested me again in an Action of £4. trespass for digging upon the Comons, which I did, & own the work to be righteous & no trespass to any: This was the Attorney of *Kingstone's* Advice, either to get Money on both sides, for they love Mony as deerly as a poor mans dog do his breakfast in a cold morning (but regard not justice) or else, That I should not remove it to a higher Court, but that the cause might be tryed there, and then they know how to please the Lords of Mannors, that have resolved to spend hundreds of pounds but they will hinder the poor from enjoying the Commons; for they will not suffer me to plead my own Cause, but I must not Fee an enemie, or else be

condemned and executed without mercy or Justice as I was before, and so to put me in Prison till I pay their unrighteous Sentence; for truly Attourneys are such neat workmen, that they can turn a Cause which way those that have the biggest purse will have them: and the Countrie knows very well, That *Kingstone* court is so full of the Kinglie power; that some will rather lose their Rights, then have their causes tryed there: one of the Officers of that court, told a friend of mine, That if the Diggers cause was good, he would pick out such a jurie as should overthrow him: And upon my former Arrest, they picked out such a jurie as Sentenced me to pay £10. damages for Plowing upon the commons, which I did not do, neither did any witness prove it before them: So that from *Kingstone* Juries, Lords of Mannors, and Kinglie power, *Good Lord deliver us.*

Do these men obey the Parliaments Acts, to throw down Kinglie power? O no: The same unrighteous doing that was complained of in King *Charls* dayes, the same doings is among them still: Monies will buy and sell Justice still: and is our 8 yeers Wars come round about to lay us down again in the kennel of injustice as much or more then before? are we no farther learned yet? O ye Rulers of *England*, when must we turn over a new leaf? Will you alwayes hold us in one Lesson? surely you will make Dunces of us; then all the Boyes in other Lands will laugh at us: come, I pray let us take forth, and go forward in our learning.

You blame us who are the Common people as though we would have no government; truly Gentlemen, We desire a righteous government with all our hearts, but the government we have gives freedom and livelihood to the Gentry, to have abundance, and to lock up Treasures of the Earth from the poor, so that rich men may have chests full of Gold and Silver, and houses full of Corn and Goods to look upon; and the poor that works to get it, can hardly live, and if they cannot work like Slaves, then they must starve. And thus the Law gives all the Land to some part of mankind whose Predecessors got it by conquest, and denies it to others, who by the righteous Law of Creation may claim an equall portion; and yet you say this is a righteous government, but surely it is no other but self-ishness, which is the great Red Dragon the Murtherer.

*England* is a Prison; the variety of subtilties in the Laws preserved by the Sword, are bolts, bars, and doors of the prison; the Lawyers are the Jaylors, and poor men are the prisoners; for let a man fall into the hands of any from the Bailiffe to the Judge, and he is either undone, or wearie of his life.

Surely this power the Laws, which is the great Idoll that people dote upon, is the burden of the Creation, a Nurserie of Idleness, luxurie, and cheating, the only enemie of Christ the King of righteousness; for though it pretend justice, yet the Judges and Law-Officers, buy and sell Justice for money, and wipes their mouths like *Solomons* whore, and says it is my calling, and never are troubled at it.

Two things must cast out this Idoll: First, Let not people send their children to those Nurseries of Covetousness, *The Innes of Court*. Secondly, let not people live in contention, but fulfill Christs last commandment, *Love*; and endeavour to practice that full point of the Law and the Prophets, *Doe as you would be done by*, and so cast out envie and discontent. Woe to you Lawyers, for your trade is the bane and miserie of the world; your power is the only power that

hinders Christ from rising; the destruction of your power will be the life of the World; it is full of confusion, it is Babylon, and surely its fall is neer, in regard the light of truth is rising, who will continue your power, but save your persons by the words of his mouth, and brightnesse of his coming.

The Lawyers trade is one of the false Prophets, that says, Lo here is Christ, Ile save you in this Court, and lo there is Christ, Ile save you in that Court: but when we have tried all, we are lost, and not saved, for we are either utterly made Beggars by this Saviour, the Law, or else we are nursed up in hardnesse of heart and cruelty against our fellow creature whom we ought to love and preserve, and not destroy: This Saviour jeeres righteousness, and bids every man save himself, and never regard what becomes of another, and so is a plain destroyer of the Creation; Surely that Wo pronounced against Lawyers by the Man Christ must be fulfilled, delay is no payment: Therefore you Parliament and Army that have power in your hands, reform the Law; and suffer none to be called to practice Law but reformed ones; nay suffer every man to plead his own cause, and choose his own Lawyer, where he finds the most ingenuous man: Wel, every mans burthen in this Age fills their mouths with words of Lamentation against Law and Lawyers sufficiently; therefore you that have an opportunitie to ease the cry of the oppressed, shut not your eies and eares, but cast out this covetous corruption whereby corrupt Lawyers doe oppress the People; it is another Branch of the Kingly power.

You Gentlemen of *Surrey*, and Lords of Mannors, and you Mr Parson *Platt* especially, that lay almost a fortnight waiting and tempting the Lord *Fairfax* to send Souldiers to drive off the Diggers, when he granted your Desire, it was but to secure the Shereiff, for he did not give them commission to beat us, which we thank him for; and we thank the Souldiers for their moderation, that they would not strike poor wormes, *Englands* and the creations faithfull friends, though you would have moved them thereunto. My Advice to you Gentlemen is this, Hereafter to lie still and cherish the Diggers, for they love you, and would not have your finger ake if they could help it; and why should you be so bitter against them? Oh let them live by you, some of them have been Souldiers, and some countrie-men that were alwayes friends to the Parliaments cause, by whose hardship and meanes you enjoy the creatures about you in peace; and will you now destroy part of them that have preserved your lives? O do not do so; be not so besotted with the Kinglie power; hereafter let not the Attourneyes or Lawyers neatly councel your Money out of your purses, and stir you up to beat and abuse the Diggers, to make all rational men laugh at your folly, and condemn you for your bitterness: If you have yet so much Money give it not away to destroy men, but give it to some poor or other to be a Stock, and bid them go and Plant the common; this will be your honour, and your comfort; assure your selves you never must have true comfort tell you be friends with the poor; therefore come, come, love the Diggers, and make restitution of their Land you from them; for what would you do if you had not such labouring men to work for you?

And you great Officers of the Army and Parliament, love your common Souldiers, (I plead for Equity and Reason) and do not force them by long delay of Payment to sell you their deer bought Debenters for a thing of naught, and then to go and buy our common Land, and crown Land, and other Land that is the spoil one of another, therewith: Remember you are Servants to the



commons of *England*, and you were Volunteers in the Wars, and the common people have paid you for your pains so largely, that some of us have not left our selves hardly bread to eat; and therefore if there be a spoil to be gathered of crown Lands, Deans, Bishops, Forrests Lands and commons, that is to come to the poor commons freely; and you ought to be content with your wages, unless you will denie Christ and the Scriptures; and you ought not to go and buy one of another that which is common to all the Nation; for you ought neither to buy nor sell other mens Proprietie by the Law of creation; for Christ gives you no such Warrant. As soon as you have freed the Earth from one intanglement of Kinglie power, will you intangle it more, and worse by another degree of Kinglie power? I pray consider what you do, and do righteously: We that are the poor commons, that paid our Money, and gave you free Quarter, have as much Right in those crown Lands and Lands of the spoil as you; therefore we give no consent That you should buy and sell our crown Lands and waste Lands, for it is our purchased inheritance from under Oppression, it is our own, even the poor common peoples of *England*: It was taken from us, and hath been held from us by former conquests, whereof the Norman conquest was the last, which is cast out by yours and our joynt Assistance; therefore you cannot in Equity take it from us, nor we cannot in Equity take it from you, for it is our joynt purchased inheritance; we paid you your wages to help us to recover it, but not to take it to your selves, and turn us out, and buy and sell it among your selves; for this is a cheat of the Kinglie swordlie power which you hold up; and we profess to all the world, in so doing you denie God, Christ, and the Scriptures whom ye professed you own: for God, Christ, and Scriptures owne no such practice: Likewise we profess to all the Creation, That in so doing you rob us of our Rights; & you kill us, by denying to give us our livelihood in our own inheritance freely, which is the crown Land and Comon Land and waste Lands, Bishops & Deans, which some of you begin to say you are not satisfied in your conscience to let us have; I, well spoke tender hearted Covetousness; if you do so you will uphold the Kinglie power, and so disobey both Acts of Parliament, and break your Oath, and you will live in the breach of those Two Commandments, *Thou shalt not kill: Thou shalt not steal*; by denying us the Earth which is our Livelyhood, and thereby killing us by a lingring death.

Well, the end of all my Speech is to point out the Kingly power, where I spie it out, and you see it remains strongly in the hands of Lords of Mannors, who have delt discourteously with some who are sincere in heart, though there have some come among the Diggers that have caused scandall, but we dis-own their wayes.

The Lords of Mannors have sent to beat us, to pull down our houses, spoil our labours; yet we are patient, and never offered any violence to them again, this 40 weeks past, but wait upon God with love till their hearts thereby be softened; and all that we desire is, but to live quietly in the land of our nativity, by our righteous labour, upon the common Land which is our own, but as yet the Lords of the Mannor so formerly called, will not suffer us, but abuse us. Is not that part of the Kingly power? In that which follows I shall cleerly prove it is, for it appears so cleer that the understanding of a child does say, It is Tyranny, it is the Kingly power of darkness, therefore we expect that you will grant us the benefit of your Act of Parliament that we may say, Truly *England* is a Common-wealth, and a free people indeed.

Sire, Though your Tithing Priests and others tell you, That we Diggers do deny God, Christ, and the Scripture, to make us odious, and themselves better thought of; yet you will see in time when the King of Righteousness whom we serve does cleare our innocencie, That our actions and conversation is the very life of the Scripture, and holds forth the true power of God and Christ. For is not the end of all preaching, praying, and profession wrapped up in this action, (namely, *Love your enemies, and doe to all men, as you would they should do to you, (or this is the very Law and the Prophets.* This is the New Commandement that Christ left behind him. Now if any seem to say this, and does not do this, but acts contrary, for my part I owne not their wayes, they are members that uphold the curse.

Bare talking of righteousnesse, and not acting, hath ruled, and yet does rule king of darkness in the creation; and it is the cause of all this immoderate confusion and ignorance that is in men.

But the actings of righteousnesse from the inward power of love, shall rule King of righteousnesse to the creation now in these later dayes, and cast the other Serpent and fiery Scorpion out; for this is Christ the restoring power: and as he rises up, so multitude of words without action (which is hypocrisie) is to die, his judgment hastens apace.

If any sort of people hold the earth to themselves by the dark Kingly power, and shut out others from that freedom, they deny God, Christ, and Scriptures, and they overthrow all their preaching praying, and profession; for the Scriptures declare them to be Hypocrites, Scribes and Pharisees, *that say, and do not;* they have words, and no deeds: Like Parson *Platt* the Preacher at *Horsley* in *Surrey*, a Lord of Mannor (by marriage) of the place where we digg, who caused a poor old mans house that stood upon the Common, to be pulled down in the evening of a cold day, and turned the old man, and his wife, and daughter to lie in the open field, because he was a Digger: and he, and other Lords of Mannors, and Gentlemen sent their servants up and down the Town, to bid their Tenants and neighbours, neither to give the Diggers lodging nor victuals., on pain of their displeasure. Though this Parson *Platt* preach the Scriptures, yet I'll affirm, he denyes God, Christ, and Scriptures, and knowes nothing of them; for covetousness, pride, and envie hath blinded his eyes. A man knowes no more of righteousness than he hath power to act; and surely, this cruelty of preaching *Platt* is an unrighteous act.

If the Diggers were enemies, (oh you Lords of Mannors) as are not, you ought to love them: I am sure, they love you; a you doubt it, put them to the tryall; you shall find them more faithfull than many of those pick-thank slaves, and belly-god servants to whom your ears are open, when they bring tales full of envie to you against us.

We are told likewise, That to make us who are called Diggers odious, and to incense you against us, there came to the Generall and Councell of State, divers Justices, and others, and told you, that we Diggers were Cavaliers, and that we waited an opportunity, and gathered together to stand up for the Prince.

But all that know us can prove that to be a false report, to the dishonour of those justices; for we have been friends to the Parliaments cause, and so do continue, and will continue; for this work of digging, to make *England* a free Common-wealth, is the life and marrow of the Parliaments cause. And the two

Acts of Parliament, the One, to cast out Kingly power, the Other, to make *England* a free Common-wealth, declares it: and we do obey those Acts, and will obey them, for they hold forth righteousness.

But for our rising in arms for the Prince, or any other, let any come and see our strength and work, and they will say, It is a meer envious slander cast upon us, to incense you against us.

Besides, You shall see by and by, That our principles are wholly against Kingly power in every one, as well as in one. Likewise we hear that they told you, that the Diggers do steal and rob from others, This likewise is a slander: we have things stolen from us; but if any can prove that any of us do steal any mans proper goods, as Sheep, Geese, Pigs, as they say, let such be made a spectacle to all the world: For my part, I own no such doing, neither do I know any such thing by any of the Diggers. Likewise they report, that we Diggers hold women to be common, and live in that bestialnesse: For my part, I declare against it; I own this to be a truth, That the earth ought to be a common Treasury to all; but as for women, *Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband*; and I know none of the Diggers that act in such an unrationall excesse of female communitie: If any should, I professe to have nothing to do with such people, but leave them to their own Master, who will pay them with torment of minde, and diseases in their bodies.

These and such-like tales, we hear, are brought to you, to incense you against us: but we desire you to mark them that bring them for we partly know who they be, and we can tell them to their faces, they were Cavaliers, and had hands in the Kentish Rising, and in stirring up that offensive *Surrey* Petition, which was the occasion of bloodshed in *Westminster-yard*, and they would rejoyce to see the Prince come in with an Armie to over-top you: for we know, they love you not but from the teeth outwards, for their own ends: And these are the proud *Hamans*, that would incense you against the *Mordecaies* of the Land, even our true-hearted friends, the Diggers. Well, in the midst of our slanders we rejoyce in the uprightness of our hearts, and we do *commit our cause to him that judgeth righteously*.

Upon these lying reports, and importunitie to the General, it seems the General granted the Lords of Mannor to have some souldiers to go along with the Sheriff, to pull down the Diggers houses; and so the souldiers did come: but they were very moderate and rationall men, and as they were sent to secure the Sheriff, so they did: but there was no cause; for, though the Gentlemen possess'd the General, that they feared opposition from the Diggers, yet the souldiers saw they lifted not up a finger in discontent, but fought against those dragons, the Lords of Manors, with the spirit of love and patience: for when the two Lords of Manor sat among the souldiers on horsback and coach, and commanded their fearfull tenants to pull down one of the Diggers houses before their faces, and rejoyced with shouting at the fall; yet some of the Diggers stood by, and were very chearfull, and preached the Gospel to those Turkish *Bashaws*, which are words of life, and in time will prove words of terroure, to torment their awakened consciences.

And the poor tenants that pulled down the house, durst do no other, becuse their Land-lords and Lords looked on, for fear they should be turned out of service, or their livings; as a poor honest man, because he looked with a cheerfull countenance upon the Diggers (though he was affraid to come neer,

or affraid to speak openly, lest his Landlords setting-dogs should smell the sound of his words, and carry a pick-thank tale, which his Lords ears are much open to) a Baily was sent presently to him, to warn him out of his house.

Can the Turkish Bashaws hold their slaves in more bondage than these Gospel-professing Lords of Manors do their poor tenants? and is not this the Kingly power? O you rulers of *England*, I pay see that your acts be obeyed, and let the oppressed go free.

And when the poor enforced slaves had pulled down the house, then their Lords gave them ten shillings to drink, and there they smiled one upon another; being fearfull, like a dog that is kept in awe, when his Master gives him a bone, and stands over him with a whip; he will eat, and look up, and twinch his tail; for they durst not laugh out, lest their Lords should hear they jeer'd them openly; for in their hearts they are Diggers. Therefore, you Lords of Manors, if you have none to stand for you but whom you force by threatning, then leave off striving against the spirit, and say you are fallen, and come in and embrace righteousnesse, that you may finde mercy betimes.

The next day after this, there came two souldiers and three Country-men to another house which the Diggers had set up, (which the Sheriff the day before had let alone, for, as some say, he was grieved to see what was done,) one of these souldiers was very civill, and walked lovingly with the Diggers round their corn which they had planted, and commended the work, and would do no harm (as divers others were of the same minde) and when he went his way, gave the Diggers 12 d. to drink: but the other souldier was so rude, that he forced those three Country-men to help him to pull down the house, and railed bitterly: the men were unwilling to pull it down; but for fear of their Landlords, and the threatning souldier, they did put their hands to pull it down.

And seeing Parson *Platt* (the Lord of that Manor) will not suffer the Diggers to have a house, (wherein he forgets his Master Christ, that is persecuted in naked, hungry, and houselesse members) yet the Diggers were mighty cheerfull, and their spirits resolve to wait upon God, to see what he will do, and they have built them some few little hutches like calf-cribs, and there they lie anights, and follow their work adayes still with wonderfull joy of heart, taking the spoyling of their goods cheerfully, counting it a great happinesse to be persecuted for righteousnesse sake, by the Priests and Professors, that are the successors of *Judas*, and the bitter-spirited Pharisees that put the man Christ *Jesus* to death. And they have planted divers Acres of Wheat and Rye, which is come up, and promises a very hopefull crop, committing their cause to God, and wait upon him, saying, O thou King of righteousnesse, do thine own work.

O that you would search and try our wayes narrowly, and see whether we deny God, Christ, Scriptures, as the Priests slander us we do; and you shall finde, that the Scriptures warrant our action, and God in Christ is the life of our souls, and the support of our spirits in the midst of this our sharp persecution from the hands of unreasonable men, who have not faith in Christ, but uphold the Kingly power, which you have Voted down.

Likewise, you shall see, that we live in the performance of that work which is the very life and marrow of the Parliaments Cause, whereby we honour the Parliament and their Cause: as you shall see by this following Declaration,

unfolding the foundation whereupon *Englands* Laws are, or the Freedom of a Common-wealth ought to be built, which is Equity and Reason.

In the time of the Kings, who came in as Conquerors, and ruled by the power of the Sword, not only the Common land, but the Inclosures also were captivated under the will of those Kings, till now of late that our later Kings granted more freedom to the Gentry than they had presently after the conquest; yet under bondage still: for what are prisons, whips and gallows in the times of peace, but the laws and power of the sword, forcing and compelling obedience, and so enslaving, as if the sword raged in the open field?

*England* was in such a slavery under the Kingly power, that both Gentry and Commonaltie groaned under bondage; and to ease themselves, they endeavoured to call a Parliament, that by their counsels and decrees they might find some freedom.

But *Charles* the then King perceiving that the Freedom they strove for, would derogate from his Prerogative-tyranny, therupon he goes into the North, to raise a War against the Parliament, and took WILLIAM *the Conqueror's* Sword into his hand again, thereby to keep under the former conquered English, and to uphold his Kingly power of self-will and Prerogative, which was the power got by former Conquests; that is, to rule over the lives and estates of all men at his will, and so to make us pure slaves and vassals.

Well, This Parliament, that did consist of the chief Lords, Lord of Manors, and Gentry, and they seeing that the King, by raising an Army, did thereby declare his intent to enslave all sorts to him by the sword; and being in distresse, and in a low ebb, they call upon the common people to bring in their Plate, Moneys, Taxes Free-quarter, Excise, and to adventure their lives with them, and they would endeavour to recover *England* from that *Norman* yolk, and make us a free people: and the common people assent hereunto, and call this the Parliaments Cause, and own it, and adventure person and purse to preserve it; and by the joynt assistance of Parliament and People, the King was beaten in the field, his head taken off, and his Kingly power voted down; and we the Commons thereby virtually have recovered our selves from the Norman Conquest, we want nothing but possession of the spoyle, which is a free use of the Land for our livelyhood.

And from hence we the common people, or younger brothers plead our propriety in the Common land, as truly our own by vertue of this victory over the King; as our elder brothers can plead proprietie in their Inclosures; and that for three reasons in *Englands* law.

First, By a lawfull purchase or contract between Parliament and us; for they were our Landlords and Lords of Mannors that held the freedom of the Commons from us, while the King was in his power; for they held title thereunto from him, he being the head, and they branches of the Kingly power, that enslaved the people by that ancient Conquerors Sword, that was the ruling power: For they said, Come and help us against the King that enslaves us, that we may be delivered from his Tyranny, and we will make you a free People.

Now they cannot make us free, unlesse they deliver us from the bondage which they themselves held us under; and that is, they held the freedom of the Earth from us: for we in part with them have delivered our selves from the King: now we claim freedom from that bondage you have, and yet do hold us under, by

the bargain and contract between Parliament and us, who (I say) did consist of Lords of Manors, and Landlords, whereof Mr. *Drake*, who hath arrested me for digging upon the Common, was one at that time: Therefore by the law of Bargain and Sale, we claim of them our freedom, to live comfortably with them in this Land of our Nativity; and this we cannot do, so long as we lie under poverty, and must not be suffered to plant the commons and waste land for our livelihood: for, take away the land from any people, and those people are in a way of continuall death and misery; and better not to have had a body, than not to have food and rayment for it. But (I say) they have sold us our freedom in the common, and have been largely paid for it; for by means of our bloods and money, they sit in peace: for if the King had prevailed, they had lost all, and been in slavery to the meanest Cavalier, if the King would. Therefore we the Commons say, Give us our bargain: if you deny us our bargain, you deny God, Christ, and Scriptures; and all your profession then is and hath been hypocrisie.

Secondly, The Commons and Crown land is our propriety by equall conquest over the Kingly power: for the Parl. did never stir up the people by promises and covenant to assist them to cast out the King, and to establish them in the Kings place and prerogative power; No, but all their Declarations were for the safety and peace of the whole Nation.

Therefore the common-people being part of the Nation, and especially they that bore the greatest heat of the day in casting out the oppressor: and the Nation cannot be in peace, so long as the Poor oppressed are in wants, and the land is intangled and held from them by bondage.

But the Victory being obtained over the King, the spoyle which is properly in the Land, ought in equity to be divided now between the two Parties, that is, Parliament and Common-people. The Parliament, consisting of Lords of Manors, and Gentry, ought to have their inclosure Lands free to them without molestation, as they are freed from the Court of Wards.

And the Common-people, consisting of Souldiers, and such as paid Taxes and Free-quarter, ought to have the freedom of all waste and common land, and Crown-land equally among them; the Souldiery ought not in equity to have all, nor the other people paid them to have all; but the spoyle ought to be divided between them that stay'd at home, and them that went to Warr; for the Victory is for the whole Nation.

And as the Parliament declared, they did all for the Nation, and not for themselves onely; so we plead with the Armie, they did not fight for themselves, but for the freedom of the Nation: and I say, we have bought our Freedom of them likewise by Taxes and Free-quarter: therefore we claim an equall Freedom with them in this Conquest over the King.

Thirdly We claim an equall portion in the Victory over the King, by vertue of the two Acts of Parliament, the One to make *England* a Free-Common-wealth; the Other to take away Kingly power. Now the Kingly power (you have heard) is a power that rules by the Sword in covetousnesse and self, giving the earth to some, and denying it to others: and this Kingly power was not in the hand of the King alone; but Lords, and Lords of Manors, and corrupt Judges, and Lawyers especially, held it up likewise; for he was the head, and they, with the Tything-priests are the branches of that Tyrannical Kingly power; and all the several limbs and members must be cast out; before Kingly power can be

pulled up root and branch. Mistake me not, I do not say, Cast out the persons of men: No, I do not desire their fingers to ake: but I say, Cast out their power, whereby they hold the people in bondage, as the King held them in bondage. And I say, it is our own Freedom we claim, both by bargain, and by equality in the Conquest; as well as by the Law of righteous Creation, which gives the Earth to all equally.

And the power of Lords of Mannors lies in this: They deny the Common people the use and free benefit of the Earth, unless they give them leave, and pay them for it, either in Rent, in Fines, in Homages, or Heriots. Surely the Earth was never made by God, that the Younger brother should not live in the Earth, unless he would work for, and pay his Elder brother Rent for the Earth: No; this Slavery came in by Conquest, and it is part of the Kingly power; and *England* cannot be a Free Common-wealth, till this Bondage be taken away. You have taken away the King; you have taken away the House of Lords: Now step two steps further, and take away the power of Lords of Mannors, and of Tything Priests, and the intolerable oppressions of Judges, by whom Laws are corrupted; and your work will be honourable.

Fourthly, if this Freedom be denied the Common people, To enjoy the Common Land; then Parliament, Army and Judges will deny Equity and Reason, whereupon the Laws of a well-governed Common-wealth ought to be built: And if this Equity be denied then there can be no Law, but Club-Law, among the people: and if the Sword must reign, then every Party will be striving to bear the Sword; and then farewell Peace; nay, farewell Religion and Gospel, unless it be made use of to intrap one another, as we plainly see some Priests and others make if a Cloke for their Knavery. If I adventure my life, and fruit of my labour, equal with you, and obtain what we strive for; it is both Equity and Reason, that I should equall divide the Spoil with you, and not you to have all, and I none: And if you deny us this, you take away our Propriety from us, our Moneys and Blood, and give us nothing for it.

Therefore, I say, the Common Land is my own Land, equal with my fellow-Commoners; and our true Propriety, by the Law of Creation: it is every ones, but not one single ones: Yea, the Commons are as truely ours by the last excellent two Acts of Parliament, the Foundation of *Englands* new righteous Government aimed at, as the Elder brothers can say the Inclosures are theirs: for they adventured their Lives, and covenanted with us to help them to preserve their Freedom: And we adventured our lives, and they covenanted with us, to purchase and to give us our Freedom, that hath been hundreds of yeers kept from us.

*Daemona non Armis, sed Morte subegit Jesus.*

By patient Sufferings, not by Death,  
 Christ did the Devil kill;  
 And by the same, still to this day,  
*his Foes he conquers still.*

True Religion, and undefiled, is this, To make restitution of the Earth, which hath been taken and held from the Common people, by the power of Conquests formerly, and so *set the oppressed free*. Do not All strive to enjoy the Land? The Gentry strive for Land. the Clergie strive for Land, the Common people strive for Land; and Buying and Selling is an Art, whereby people endeavour to cheat one another of the Land. Now if any can prove, from the Law of

Righteousness, that the Land was made peculiar to him and his successively, shutting others out, he shall enjoy it freely, for my part: But I affirm, It was made for all; and true- Religion is, To let every one enjoy it. Therefore, you Rulers of *England*, make restitution of the Lands which the Kingly power holds from us: *Set the oppressed free*; and come in, and honour Christ, who is the Restoring Power, and you shall finde rest.

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